

## STATEWIDE RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS IN HAWAII

The undersigned organizations are proud to join in support of sustained annual commitments by the Legislature toward truly affordable housing and core homelessness services.

Almost five decades ago, the state of Hawaii declared a “housing crisis” that has continued to worsen as housing costs outpace wage increases. More families are forced to choose between having a place to live and having life’s basic necessities, including food. Groups such as Partners in Care (PIC), Bridging the Gap (BTG), and the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) are working together to turn around this housing and homelessness crisis, but our efforts alone cannot solve this problem.

Last session, the Hawaii Legislature made a bold and unprecedented commitment of \$200 million for truly affordable housing and \$50 million for resources to address homelessness – nearly seven times the amounts committed from the year before. This level of investment is necessary to make significant progress in ending this crisis.

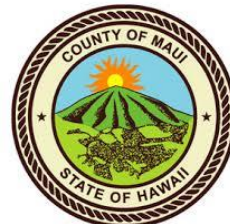
With that in mind, we the undersigned support:

- Sustained annual commitments for truly affordable housing, including targeted housing for the chronically homeless;
- Sustained annual commitments for core homelessness services that work (such as Housing First) to ensure their long-term viability and success;
- Funding to test new programs that fill gaps in existing services, such as a program to help kupuna facing eviction;
- Changes to mental health laws, ensuring that people incapacitated by mental illness and suffering on the streets are connected with the help they need.

Programs to address affordable housing and homelessness need sufficient, long-term funding to truly make a difference. Too many Hawaii residents are teetering on the brink of homelessness because there is not enough affordable housing, and core homelessness programs such as Housing First have proved their value and effectiveness. We urge the Legislature to explore options to make such sustained funding possible for housing and homelessness.



**PARTNERS IN CARE**  
OAHU'S CONTINUUM OF CARE



## SUPPORTERS OF STATEWIDE RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS IN HAWAII

| NAME                                | TITLE   | ORGANIZATION   |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| <u>Scott Morishige</u>              | <u>Chair</u>                                    | <u>Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)</u>       |
| <u>Marc Alexander</u>               | <u>Executive Director</u>                       | <u>City &amp; County Office of Housing</u>                     |
| <u>Sharon Hirota</u>                | <u>Hawaii County Homeless Coordinator</u>       | <u>County of Hawaii</u>  |
| <u>David Nakama</u>                 | <u>Maui County Homeless Program Coordinator</u> | <u>County of Maui</u>  |
| <u>Sharon Graham</u>                | <u>Homeless Coordinator</u>                     | <u>County of Kauai</u>   |
| <u>Connie Mitchell</u>              | <u>Executive Director<br/>Executive Chair</u>   | <u>Institute for Human Services (IHS)<br/>Partners in Care</u> |
| <u>Brandee Menino</u>               | <u>Executive Director<br/>Chair</u>             | <u>Hope Services Hawaii<br/>Bridging the Gap</u>               |
| <u>Norm Baker</u>                   | <u>Chief Operating Officer</u>                  | <u>Aloha United Way</u>  |
| <u>Tina Andrade</u>                 | <u>V.P. - Mission Integration</u>               | <u>Catholic Charities Hawaii</u>                               |
| <u>Phil Acosta</u>                  | <u>Executive Director</u>                       | <u>ALEA Bridge</u>   |
| <u>Majs. Jeff and Eloisa Martin</u> | <u>Divisional Leaders</u>                       | <u>The Salvation Army<br/>Hawaiian &amp; Pacific Islands</u>   |
| <u>Heather Lusk</u>                 | <u>Executive Director</u>                       | <u>Hawaii Health &amp; Harm Reduction Center</u>               |
| <u>Jon Berliner</u>                 | <u>Executive Director</u>                       | <u>Gregory House Programs</u>                                  |
| <u>Samantha Church</u>              | <u>Executive Director</u>                       | <u>Family Promise of Hawaii</u>                                |
| <u>Gavin Thornton</u>               | <u>Executive Director</u>                       | <u>Hawaii Appleseed Center</u>                                 |
| <u>Judith Clark</u>                 | <u>Executive Director</u>                       | <u>Hawaii Youth Services Network</u>                           |
| <u>Holly Holowach</u>               | <u>Director</u>                                 | <u>Holomua Na Ohana/Weinberg Village Waimanalo</u>             |
| <u>Marya Grambs</u>                 | <u>Board Member</u>                             | <u>Drug Policy Forum Hawaii</u>                                |
| <u>Jaqueline Kelley-Uyeoka</u>      | <u>Deputy CEO</u>                               | <u>Hale Kipa Inc.</u>  |

## SUPPORTERS OF STATEWIDE RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS IN HAWAII

| NAME                      | TITLE  | ORGANIZATION   |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| <u>Mary Scott-Lau</u>     | <u>Founder/Executive Director</u>                      | <u>Women in Need</u>                                     |
| <u>Linda Ahue</u>         | <u>Executive Director</u>                              | <u>Steadfast Housing Development</u>                     |
| <u>Bryan L. Talisayan</u> | <u>Executive Director</u>                              | <u>PHOCUSED</u>  |
| <u>Craig Shoji</u>        | <u>Co-Founder</u>                                      | <u>Revive + Refresh</u>                                  |
| <u>Robert Piper</u>       | <u>Executive Director</u>                              | <u>Honolulu Community Action<br/>Program Inc. (HCAP)</u> |
| <u>Stephanie Kendrick</u> | <u>Public Policy Advocate</u>                          | <u>Hawaiian Humane Society</u>                           |
| <u>Terry Brooks</u>       | <u>President, Principal Broker</u>                     | <u>Housing Solutions Inc.</u>                            |
| <u>Phyllis Dendle</u>     | <u>Chief Executive Officer</u>                         | <u>Waikiki Health</u>                                    |
| <u>Carla Houser</u>       | <u>Executive Director</u>                              | <u>RYSE</u>  |
| <u>Tom McDonald</u>       | <u>Executive Director</u>                              | <u>Alternative Structures International</u>              |
| <u>Dodie Rivera</u>       | <u>Case Management Supervisor</u>                      | <u>Waianae Coast Comprehensive<br/>Health Center</u>     |
| <u>Paula Arcena</u>       | <u>Executive Vice President –<br/>External Affairs</u> | <u>AlohaCare</u>   |

## ISLAND VOICES

# Major investment needed for housing

By Connie Mitchell  
and Brandee Menino

A place to call home. A place from which family and community can grow and thrive. For many Hawaii households, a decent, affordable place to live is out of reach. The strength and health of Hawaii's people and communities depend on all of us coming together to turn around a problem that's been growing for decades.

In 1970, the state of Hawaii declared a "housing crisis" here. Year after year it's gotten worse. Increases in housing costs have outpaced increases in wages. More and more families are unable to afford housing and still have enough left for food and basic necessities.

Turning around a housing and homelessness crisis that's been growing for 50 years will be difficult, but not impossible. It will require coming together around a shared vision, taking bold action, and using data-driven approaches to efficiently use resources. It will take persistence, commitment and time.

Years ago, a family facing homelessness would arrive at service provider's door and receive whatever the provider had to offer whether or not it was the best suited service for the situation. Or the family might be sent away with only a list of other providers and a prayer that one of them could help.

Today, regardless of which provider's door they knock on, families are assessed and matched with the services and providers that can best address their particular situation. This more-connected, efficient and effective system is a result of the work of Partners in Care (PIC), Bridging the Gap (BTG) and the Hawaii Inter-agency Council on Homelessness (HICH) — groups that consists of nearly 100 homelessness stakehold-



Connie Mitchell, left, chairs Partners in Care (Oahu); Brandee Menino chairs Bridging the Gap (Hawaii island, Maui and Kauai).

ers including service providers; health care organizations; federal, state, and county government leaders; and business leaders.

Efficiency is critical, but even the most efficient system cannot address a problem of this magnitude without sufficient resources. Last year, legislators made a bold and unprecedented commitment of \$200 million for truly affordable housing and \$50 million for resources to address homelessness — nearly seven times the amounts committed from the year before.

To turn around a problem that's been growing for 50 years, this level of investment needs to become the

new normal. Recognizing this, PIC and BTG have adopted a comprehensive proposal to address homelessness, also supported by HICH:

>> Sustained annual commitments for truly affordable housing, including targeted housing for the chronic homelessness. We estimate, for example, that annual commitments of \$200 million, including \$75 million toward chronic homelessness, would save the state more than \$2 billion over 10 years, primarily due to reduced medical and related emergency services costs.

>> Sustained annual commitments for core homelessness services that work — such as Housing First — but which have previously been funded on a year-to-year basis, hindering the long-term planning necessary to efficiently run programs; historically stable funding for other core services such as temporary housing needs to remain in place.

>> Funding to test new programs that would fill gaps in existing services, such as a program for kupuna facing eviction because their fixed incomes haven't increased with rapidly rising rents.

>> Changes to mental health laws to ensure that people incapacitated by mental illness and suffering on the streets are connected with the help they need.

Hawaii's housing and homelessness problem has grown to the point that it threatens not only those living in homelessness or teetering on its brink; it affects us all. By coming together around a shared vision and by seeking out the necessary resources, we are gaining ground on addressing homelessness.

We hope more of our community will join us — share your knowledge, skills and resources — in refining the vision and improving our systems so our communities have a stable foundation on which to build and thrive.

